

1006799
-001

Kate Bouve 04/06/98 09:54 AM

To: Norman Spurling/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
cc:
Subject: Zinc Phosphide Misuse - Note to File -Forwarded

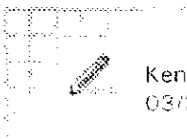
Norman -

Can you load this incident into IDS?

Thanks.

Kate

Forwarded by Kate Bouve/DC/USEPA/US on 04/06/98 11:02 AM



Kennan Garvey
03/28/98 06:33 PM

To: Kate Bouve/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Jerry Blondell/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Tina
Levine/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
cc: ward.john@epa.gov, Charles Franklin/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Jay Ellenberger/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Anne
Lindsay/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Sepehr Haddad/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Regina Langton@EPA, Elaine
Lyon/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Tracy Perry/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Elizabeth Resek/DC/USEPA/US@EPA,
Jim Roelofs@EPA, [REDACTED] Teresa Dineen/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, [REDACTED]
Jake MacKenzie@EPA
Subject: Zinc Phosphide Misuse - Note to File -Forwarded

fyi, from John Ward

Forwarded by Kennan Garvey/DC/USEPA/US on 03/28/98 06:36 PM

John Ward@X400 on 03/27/98 04:31:44 PM



To: Kennan Garvey@EPA, Mary McDonnell@X400
cc: Donald Baumgartner@X400
Subject: Zinc Phosphide Misuse - Note to File -Forwarded

FYI

Story was in today's Chicago Tribune. IDPH seems to be on top of it. The store
has hired an environmental contractor to do cleanup,

John

X.400 Forwarded Message

To: \O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US\D = WPMAIL * R5CHG.in:(q)bjohnson(a)idph.state.il
us(q)@X400
To: \O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US\D = WPMAIL * R5CHG.in:(q)kapalap(a)state.mi.us(q)
@X400
To: Donald Baumgartner@X400

(see also
1006825)

Personal privacy information

IsB need
3/28/98
104

To: \O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US\D = WPMail^rtpmainhub.internet:(q)friecks(a)idp
h.state.il.us(q)@X400
To: \O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US\D = WPMail^rtpmainhub.internet:(q)twalker(a)agr
084r1.state.il.us(q)@X400
To: \O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US\D = WPMail^rtpmainhub.internet:(q)wblack(a)agrO
84r1.state.il.us(q)@X400
CC: Chi Tang@X400
CC: Patricia Boone@X400
CC: David Star@X400
CC: John Ward@X400
CC: Dea Zimmerman@X400
CC: \G = Jerry\S = Blondell\O = EPA\P = GOV + EPA\A = ATTMAIL\C = US@X400
CC: Tina Levine@X400
From: Donald Baumgartner@X400
Subject: Zinc Phosphide Misuse - Note to File
Importance: Normal
Sensitivity: Not sensitive

Zinc Phosphide Tracking Powder (EPA Reg. #12455-16) Misuse by Commercial Applicator within Venture Department Store in Orland Park, IL.

8:50 AM (Mar. 27, 1998):

Telephone notification from Tom Walker, Pesticides Program Manager for the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA) that an exposure incident had occurred within a Venture department store in Orland Park, IL. Mr. Walker had been notified at 2:00 AM on this date by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. He also had conversations about the incident this morning with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). A commercial applicator had overapplied (6 pounds according to newspaper account) a zinc phosphide tracking powder product days earlier (10 days according to newspaper report). Seven people (mostly store employees according to newspaper report) were reportedly taken to nearby hospitals for poisoning symptoms and subsequently released. An article on the store closing and poisonings appeared in the Chicago Tribune on this date.

9:05 AM (Mar. 27, 1998):

In response to an E Mail received from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), asking about other laboratories which could analyze investigative samples for zinc phosphide (ZP), I immediately sought the assistance of Pat Boone of our Section (resident Chemist and QA Manager) to contact the other Region 5 State Labs for methods and their ability/familiarity to analyze ZP. IDPH said in their memo that neither their Lab nor that of IDA could analyze for ZP. Without standards or familiarity with the RUP product, IDA did not feel comfortable in handling the samples.

I immediately checked with the EPA Region 5 Lab (Chi Tang) concerning their ability to analyze for ZP. The reply was that they could not, but suggested that they could test for zinc only if that were helpful. They had no standard or method.

Pat checked with the Indiana State Chemist Lab, who replied that they could not analyze for ZP since they have never attempted this.

Michigan Dept. of Agriculture (MDA) Lab (Chun-Wei Kao, ph. 517/337-5092) has

had past experience in analyzing for ZP, and offered to run the IDPH samples if needed. He explained to Pat that although EPA Manual of Chemical Methods has two for ZP, the most sensitive would be that involving Flame Photometric Detection (as per Dean Hill from a former lab training class), which MDA could run. Pat next telephoned the MDA Lab Supervisor (Leon Schmelzer) for his approval for analysis of the ZP samples, and I telephoned (at 9:40 AM) Brian Rowe, Program Manager for MDA., for their permission and clearance. In the absence of Brian, Polly Kapala the Acting Manager was briefed on the case and need for sample analysis. She did not foresee any problems with their Lab working on the samples, but asked for any supportive information for Upper Management approval. Copies of the E Mails and newspaper article were sent to her on this date.

Dr. Chun-Wei Kao
Michigan Depart. Agriculture Laboratory
1615 South Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
ph. 517/337-5092
fax 517/337-5094

10:30 AM (Mar. 27):

I telephoned Fred Riecks again to reply to him our discussions with the MDA lab for ZP analysis. I also inquired further of the case. ILL EPA had been called out only late Wednesday evening (March 25), and that the local health department closed the store that day. IDPH investigators were out at the store yesterday (March 26). The applicator treated the store last Saturday (March 21) after closing. IDPH determined that the applicator overapplied the product in excess of label rates, and the newspaper reported that the product was applied on shelves and wall edges in the storeroom, and near ventilation intake ducts. IDPH reports that they have 2-3 jars with powder inside which they are seeking to be analyzed in support of the enforcement case. IDPH said that they will wait for 2-3 hours yet to hear from another State lab, before they seek the assistance of an outside lab such as MDA for analysis.

11:10 AM (Mar. 27, 1998):

I telephoned the EPA HQ Registration Division and suspected Product Manager (Tina Levine, 703/308-7055) to report the incident. In her absence, I left a telephone message. I also contacted Dr. Jerry Blondell of EPA HQ (703/305-5336) to whom I briefly summarized the case, and provided copies of all E Mails and the newspaper coverage on this date. Jerry said that EPA does not have many human incident reports for ZP, except for a case on June 27, 1996 from Oklahoma in which a woman opened up a container at a Walmart check-out line, containing ZP on peanuts as a bait, and she and 3 store employees became ill from inhalation of ZP.

In contact with water or with acids, ZP emits phosphine gas which is the toxicant. Ingestion or inhalation of the ZP powder is certainly dangerous.

Donald Baumgartner
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13544

R122470

Chemical: Zinc phosphide (Zn_3P_2)

PC Code:
088601

HED File Code: 15100 Other Incident Documents

Memo Date: 3/28/1998

File ID: 00000000

Accession #: 412-06-0195

HED Records Reference Center
7/20/2006